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President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 45 and 55 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005)

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 19 States members of the Rio Group: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

These meetings signal the beginning of the second phase of the preparatory process for the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, to be convened pursuant to resolution 58/291 to assess progress towards fulfilment of the commitments of the Millennium Declaration and towards integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of the major conferences and summits of the United Nations in the economic and social fields.

In that context, the Rio Group would like to refer to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005), submitted in response to the request of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General notes that in preparing that report, he drew on his eight years' experience as Secretary-General, on his own conscience and convictions and on his understanding of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as on the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the report of the Millennium Project.

The Rio Group would like to thank the Secretary-General for his contribution to the debates that Member States are holding at this important moment for the United Nations. The Rio Group believes that the report of the Secretary-General deserves constructive consideration by all Member States. The negotiations on reform will require great flexibility in the search for agreements and consensus.

The Rio Group also believes that September's summit must provide an opportunity to fulfil our commitment with respect to the validity of multilateralism as a way to address the challenges we face in our fight to eradicate poverty and hunger and to promote the economic and social development of our peoples, and because of the need for an effective concept of collective security and respect for human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all people, whose well-being must be at the centre of our concern.

In that context, the September summit will provide a special opportunity for an objective analysis of our Organization's functioning after 60 years of existence and for the adoption of the bold new

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normative and institutional measures needed to adapt the unique tool that is the United Nations to the challenges brought by the new millennium.

In that context, the countries members of the Rio Group would like to express their complete readiness to collaborate fully so that, in this new phase of international relations, the United Nations can play its rightful role in the areas of peace and security, economic and social development and the protection and the promotion of human rights.

The Rio Group believes that, during the intergovernmental consideration of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, we should continue to broaden our focus on social and development issues, emphasizing issues covered by the major United Nations conferences and summits that paid special attention to improving all people's living conditions and strengthening respect for their human rights. We also believe that the various situations affecting middle-income countries and small and vulnerable economies must be given due consideration in the outcome of the 2005 summit to ensure that, in 2015, they will be making progress in their efforts to provide better living conditions for their peoples and not sliding down a dangerous slope towards growing poverty and marginalization, which we see today.

From that perspective, we wish to emphasize that market access and the progress of the Doha development round have never been, are not and never should be presented as linked to any conditionality. Any approach to the issue must continue to explore the problem of our countries' external debt, linking the important concept of debt sustainability not only to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but also to the "MDGs-plus", or additional millennium development goals. We understand that such an emphasis on development issues must also include the profound interrelationships among sustainable development; the stability of economic, political, social and environmental systems; democracy; the universal enjoyment of full human rights; internal and external peace; and security, including in the event of natural disasters.

The Rio Group also wishes to highlight the importance of the "Action against Hunger and Poverty" initiative, which, among other things, envisages a set of innovative development financing mechanisms to increase current official development assistance levels in accordance with the commitments and agreements undertaken and contained in the Monterrey Consensus.

The Rio Group agrees with the Secretary-General — and has stated— that there is an urgent need for developed countries that have not yet done so to establish timetables for achieving the goal of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance and to ensure that such assistance will promptly reach countries that are falling further behind in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. We repeat: the goal is only 0.7 per cent of gross national income.

Finally, with regard to reform, the Rio Group believes that the progress that can be made at the normative level must be supported by coherent institutional changes that facilitate the implementation of agreements reached in the areas of development, security and universal human rights protection.

For our Group, democracy is a universal value. Therefore, we reiterate that — as our Presidents stated at the summit held at San José, Costa Rica — the consolidation, preservation and promotion of democracy are fundamental prerequisites for equality, justice, freedom, peace and the sustainable development of our peoples. As Chair of the Rio Group, Argentina thanks the Secretary-General for mentioning that principle.

The Rio Group also recognizes that it is important for the United Nations to hold a debate on the international community's response to cases of massive human rights violations or genocide. Special attention must always be devoted to preventing genocide or massive human rights abuses. Such a debate should encompass a legal framework that conforms to the Charter of the United Nations.

For our Group, any reform of the Organization must assign priority to strengthening the rule of law and respecting and promoting human rights. The Rio Group agrees with the Secretary-General that the rule of law is strengthened by universal participation in international instruments for the protection and promotion of human rights. Furthermore, the Rio Group is prepared to consider strengthening human rights institutions, given that the Commission on Human Rights requires reform.

The Rio Group views with interest a General Assembly debate on the use of force in accordance with the Charter.

The proposal to create a Peacebuilding Commission is an important issue that should be thoroughly debated by all Member States within the framework of the General Assembly.

For our Group, the fight against terrorism requires that we arrive at a definition of terrorism in the convention currently being formulated. That will enable us to face that scourge from a multilateral perspective and with a unitary focus. The dimensions of human rights and due process must always be present in the fight against terrorism.

Furthermore, the Rio Group is concerned at the increase in transnational organized crime — which we believe to be closely linked to terrorism — and the global problem of the illicit narcotics trade, which undoubtedly affects the security of all States. We agree with the Secretary-General, who calls in his report for all States to ratify and implement the conventions punishing all such illicit activities.

Reform of the Secretariat must make it more effective and efficient. Reform must strive to make it more transparent with monitoring and accountability mechanisms. It must seek ethical and professional excellence. That is why we want to know about the plan that the Secretary-General will implement to attain those objectives. We will actively participate — both as a group and as individual States — in the General Assembly's assessment of existing mandates and structures to improve the distribution of resources and to avoid duplication.

The countries members of the Rio Group commit themselves to working creatively and constructively in the various consultations and negotiations during the intergovernmental process that begins today.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): At the outset, let me affirm our full support for the statement delivered by my friend the representative of Samoa on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

We are distributing to delegations the full text of our remarks, which is significantly longer than the text that I will deliver in the interests of brevity.

We unequivocally welcome the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). It contains action-oriented and ambitious measures that, taken as a whole, can effect significant improvements to the United Nations and its ability to respond to the diverse threats and challenges facing us in the twenty-first century.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General has provided a clear direction for discussion at the High-level Meeting in September and a comprehensive package of concrete outcomes for consideration. We must seize the unique opportunity he has given us to adopt watershed reforms of the United Nations. Failing to reach broad agreement on a comprehensive reform package would be a severe blow to our shared interests in improving international cooperation.

I would also like to register Australia's and my own personal appreciation for the leadership that you, Sir, have shown in the preparatory process, including by convening this meeting today, and to offer our encouragement and ongoing support for your efforts to guide Member States towards an agreement able to advance our collective interests in a stronger, more effective United Nations. I offer these remarks, Sir, as one of your humble facilitators.

There are many Member States interested in responding to this important report by the Secretary-General and, in Australia's usual tradition of getting to the point quickly, I will only go so far today as highlighting some of the most important elements of our more comprehensive statement, which is being circulated.

The Secretary-General's report rightly acknowledges the special needs of Africa. Nevertheless, we must ensure that the summit outcome also recognizes pressing development needs elsewhere, including in the Asia and Pacific region, where some two thirds, or 700 million, of the world's poor live. There needs to be recognition of the specific development needs and challenges facing small island developing States, as agreed in the Mauritius Strategy. Economic growth is a powerful driver of development, supported by comprehensive trade liberalization by developed and developing countries alike under the World Trade Organization and Doha round negotiations. We should highlight the importance to development and trade-derived economic growth and ensure that the summit creates a positive atmosphere for any early resolution and concrete outcomes from the Doha round.

Australia agrees with the Secretary-General's proposals for strengthening the multilateral framework for arms control and non-proliferation. The summit outcome should — indeed, must — endorse a range of practical measures, including the commencement of negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty; continuation of the test-ban moratorium pending entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; adopting the model additional protocol as a safeguards standard; addressing the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction proliferation through expanding the number of countries participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative; the conclusion of a small arms and light weapons treaty; and greater efforts to address the threat posed by the illicit transfer and use of man-portable air-defence systems.

Australia welcomes the comprehensive strategy against terrorism which the Secretary-General announced in Madrid and agrees that concerted efforts should be made to finalize the draft comprehensive convention against terrorism. Australia has also welcomed the recent adoption by the Ad Hoc Committee on terrorism of the text of the convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and looks forward, following its adoption by the General Assembly, to its being opened for signature on the first day of the summit.

Australia looks forward to more details on the peacebuilding commission, not least given the important role we think it could have in addressing the problems facing fragile States. The establishment of a practical and effective commission should be a key summit outcome.

Australia also welcomes the Secretary-General's endorsement of the emerging norm of the "responsibility to protect" and his call to embrace that norm and to act on it when national Governments are unable or unwilling to protect their citizens. We also support the Secretary-General's proposal to develop greater capacity in the United Nations to assist emerging democracies, and we agree with his suggestions on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of human rights treaty bodies. That is consistent with objectives Australia has pursued for several years and should be undertaken as a priority.

The Secretary-General raises important concerns over the handling of human rights in the Commission on Human Rights. Australia agrees with him on the vital need to elevate and to mainstream consideration of human rights in the United Nations system and looks forward to further discussions on that.

Extensive discussions are already taking place on the need for Security Council reform, and it is imperative that we reach an outcome this year which is broadly acceptable to all. As we have made clear, Australia supports the expansion of permanent membership through the inclusion of Japan, India, Brazil, an African country, and possibly Indonesia.

Australia sees the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as a clear threat to international peace and security. As recognized by the Secretary-General, robust action is needed to address the issue of such proliferation, including by the Security Council. Existing and prospective Council members should be prepared to meet the international community's expectations of them in that regard.

Australia has long been a consistent and strong voice calling for improved management and accountability of the United Nations. We see Secretariat reform as indispensable if we are to meaningfully renew the United Nations. We strongly support all of the Secretary-General's proposals on improving the Organization's structure and management methods and consider that such reforms are a major component of the package of reforms under consideration.

The difficult task our leaders face in reaching agreement on improving the United Nations has undoubtedly been made easier by the far-reaching and ambitious reforms put forward by the Secretary-General. Australia considers it imperative that we respond to the Secretary-General's call for action, giving close attention to each of his proposals in a purposeful and constructive way. It is vital that we do not waste this unique opportunity for significant reform of the United Nations and, at all costs, avoid squandering this chance in petty point-scoring or negotiations to the lowest common denominator. We all need to grasp the magnitude and importance of the task we face and, as the Secretary-General has done, respond boldly with a clear vision of our common interests in creating a stronger and better United Nations.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands): First, Palau wishes to associate itself with the expressions of condolence, sympathy and sadness for the loss to the world of His

Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of the Principality of Monaco.

We also wish to associate ourselves now with the excellent statement of the Pacific Island Forum group and, in particular, with its reference to the need for urgent attention to the execution of the Mauritius Strategy.

We take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General and his staff for the comprehensive report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", and we reiterate our gratitude to the many experts who participated in the groundbreaking work that resulted in the report on the Millennium Development Goals and the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

The Secretary-General has addressed many issues that are critical to the future of our world's citizens. Palau has also addressed some of those in previous statements, which it reiterates here, including its support for reform of the Security Council pursuant to model A and the permanent membership of Japan. But for the purposes of this short statement, our focus is on the development of Palau and of small island developing States which are similarly situated.

As the Secretary-General has stated, "[O]ne of the great challenges of the new millennium is to insure that all States are strong enough to meet the many challenges they face" (*A/59/2005, para. 19*). The Secretary-General goes on to say: "No country, weak or strong, can realize prosperity in a vacuum" (*ibid., para. 24*).

It is my duty to suggest to this body that just such a vacuum exists in many small island developing States and, more particularly, in the Republic of Palau. The vacuum is caused by the remoteness and isolation of Palau and those other States, and by the failure of the institutions of the United Nations to create a compelling presence within Palau's borders. In truth and in fact, despite the vast resources that have been marshalled by the United Nations and the developed countries to attack the problems addressed by the reports that have been issued, there is not one single permanent United Nations representative in Palau to interact with the Government and with civil society to build the capacity of the State to address the daunting and complicated challenges that confront it.

In his 2003 report on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Secretary-General noted that:

> "Unless developing countries enjoy — and are seen by the global public to enjoy — greater access to, and a voice in, institutions whose policies have a profound impact on the lives of their citizens, the public hostility to globalization ... will continue to grow." (*A/58/323, para. 71*)

But where is the access of Palauan citizens to those key international organizations? Where does the flag of the United Nations fly in Palau? Nowhere at all. The United States has an embassy with permanent employees and diplomatic personnel in Palau. Japan has an embassy with permanent employees in Palau. If it is not too small for them to lend a hand, why does it appear to be too small for the United Nations?

While clearly the establishment of regional centres is a useful device, it cannot replace the need for an in-country presence to both spark the interest and enthusiasm of the local populace and to provide ready and willing assistance in accessing and comprehending the vast and complicated opportunities that are available to Palauans beyond their shores. I suggest that every State in the world community is entitled to the permanent presence of at least one talented United Nations official who can guide the local population through the maze. Only then will the requisite capacity be developed. Only then will the young people feel the presence of what otherwise might be thought of as an impenetrable, inaccessible and distant bureaucracy.

It seems to me inarguable that a permanent office in every Member State is the only way to provide the greater access to the world institutions that the Secretary-General has called for. The only reason that this quite practical and obvious solution to the remoteness and isolation of Palau and other countries like it has not been implemented is an argument relating to its cost. It must somewhere be believed that it is better to group United Nations personnel in so-called regional centres and to periodically visit States like Palau, or to bring Palauans to those regional centres for seminars and workshops. I suggest that the cost of those visits is probably greater than the cost of actually locating an official within the State. However, even assuming for the purposes of argument that some slight increase in cost would be occasioned by the development of country offices in remote States, the

benefits of such an initiative would far outweigh the costs, for, as the Secretary-General has observed:

> "In an era of global interdependence, the glue of common interest, if properly perceived, should bind all States together in this cause, as should the impulses of our common humanity." (*A/59/2005, para. 2*)

Until there is an actual United Nations presence in each Member State, the people of the world will not perceive their interdependence, and a whole class of States will be left in that abhorrent vacuum, which will undo us all.

Mr. Nimac (Croatia): Thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting of the plenary and for preparing the calendar of work on United Nations reform leading up to the summit to be held in September. The Croatian delegation also extends its thanks to the Secretary-General and to the Secretariat for the report "In larger freedom". My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement of the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union, but wishes to take this opportunity to provide some brief additional comments on particular aspects of the report.

Croatia subscribes to the sentiment evident in the report of the timeliness of United Nations reform. The art will be in finding the way among the diverse interests of Member States. We believe that this is an achievable task.

Development is a pillar of the United Nations mandate and the Millennium Development Goals are international obligations. As such, we welcome the recommitment to the Monterrey and Johannesburg outcomes and the renewed emphasis upon the achievement of the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance. We consider it important to reaffirm all the outcomes of the United Nations conferences, which form part of the agreed international development framework of which comprehensive debt relief and completion of the Doha round are key additional elements.

The maintenance of international peace and security, and the struggle against terrorism and transnational organized crime are our common concern. "In larger freedom" proposes a range of measures to strengthen the normative basis for State and human security. Croatia will engage constructively in the dialogue to come on those issues.

We are pleased to see the attempt to draw together security and development. To many countries with the experience of conflict, but also that of building national capacities and institutions post-conflict, that link is clear. We therefore welcome the proposal of establishing a peacebuilding commission, which would fill a void in the United Nations system. We await with interest a more detailed elaboration of what is envisaged.

The proposed structure of the peacebuilding commission appears to be restrictive towards small States by limiting membership to leading troop contributors, major donors, the international financial institutes and subsets of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. A modality needs to be found for the inclusion of the legitimate voice of small States that have, by their own experience, spanned the transition from conflict to relief and then to development. Moreover, the report seems to exclude a direct preventative role for the proposed commission. We look forward to further consultations on those issues.

Lasting peace and security can be founded only upon the rule of law. Croatia supports a stronger United Nations role in building State capacity to allow States to deliver rule of law for all their citizens. Responsible States provide safety for their citizens and security to their neighbourhood. Croatia supports the proposal of the Secretary-General to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights.

Reform of the Security Council has been on the agenda of the United Nations for many years. In relation to the proposed models, the Republic of Croatia supports an expansion in the number of permanent and non-permanent seats. However, Croatia is concerned that the proposals do not foresee the existence of the Eastern European Group. That will not serve a final agreement on Council reform. We also believe that the Eastern European Group, given the growth in its membership in the past 15 years, has an equally legitimate claim, as do others, to an additional non-permanent place on the Council.

Croatia has aligned itself with that part of the statement of the Chairman of the Eastern European Group for the month of April, Estonia, which sets out the common position of the States members of the

Eastern European Group eligible for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council.

Reform, if it is to succeed, must justly account for the interests of all and not be or be perceived to be at the expense of anyone. Additionally, reform of the Council must extend to its working methods and its interaction with other principal organs, particularly the Economic and Social Council.

The Security Council is not the only principal organ in need of reform. Proposals for the rationalization of the work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and linking the mandate of the latter to follow-up on the Millennium Development Goals is an idea worthy of further elaboration. The Secretary-General's report has set in train a discussion which needs to be conducted. The timetable is a tight one, but, with the goodwill of Member States, there is sufficient time for a proper distillation of views.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): Permit me to join those who have spoken before me in mourning the untimely deaths of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

Uganda associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Malawi on behalf of the African Group, as well as with the statement to be made by the representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic with regard to landlocked developing countries.

The Uganda delegation commends the Secretary-General's report, which outlines a number of important reforms. Time does not allow for an in-depth analysis of the report; suffice it to highlight some few areas.

While I agree generally with the Secretary-General's assertion that the reforms he proposes should be adopted as a package and not be treated as an à-la-carte menu, we see the possibility of not reaching a consensus on those measures, in which case it would be prudent to adopt a practical approach and to forge ahead with those proposals on which we can agree. Quite rightly, the Secretary-General emphasizes that his proposals give equal weight and attention to three great purposes of the Organization: development, security and human rights. It appears, however, that security has taken centre stage and that development is seen from the angle of security, thus giving it a secondary role. In fact, unless issues of development, such as poverty, education, health and the environment, are addressed, one cannot meaningfully talk of security.

In that context, therefore, it is the view of my delegation that the Economic and Social Council should be rejuvenated to play its role, as envisaged in the Charter. To say that, over time, other bodies, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the specialized agencies, have usurped the powers and role of the Economic and Social Council is a defeatist attitude. Both the Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies should be adequately funded to address issues of development.

My delegation is happy with the special attention being given to African needs. While the African countries are striving to adopt Millennium Development Goal-based poverty-reduction strategies, the developed countries should fulfil their part of the bargain by contributing 0.7 of their gross national income as official development assistance within a specified timetable. We have heard much rhetoric. It is time for action, and the "quick wins" proposal in the Secretary-General's report is welcome in that regard. Such basic needs as soil nutrients, universal primary education and providing free meals to primary school children — my country has already embarked on those measures — as well as such infrastructure as feeder roads, medicine for preventable diseases, water and sanitation, improved seeds and so on, should be the focus of our development partners. Above all, what is needed is political good will to implement promises already given by developed countries in numerous international forums. My delegation supports the call to complete the Doha round of negotiations by 2006. Africa's persistent demand for access to the markets of the developed countries should be met.

My delegation welcomes the proposed establishment of a peacebuilding commission. It would be useful in preventing countries from slipping back into conflict and strengthening the institutions that promote stability in countries that are currently not experiencing conflicts. It should be well-funded, independent and not an appendage of the Security Council.

We support the establishment of a democracy fund and an international finance facility. However, the democracy fund should be used to support countries'

home-grown institutions of democracy and not to import foreign brands of democracy and to use them as a conditionality for accessing the democracy fund. My delegation also supports setting up a $1-billion voluntary fund to provide urgent relief to victims of sudden disasters. Environmental concerns should also be addressed, especially by the developed countries that are responsible for most carbon emissions.

The proposal to do away with the present Commission on Human Rights, which enjoys universal membership, and to replace it with a small body elected by two thirds of the General Assembly is problematic. While the existing body has at times been abused by the provision of membership to some States whose observance of human rights leaves a lot to be desired, proposing the creation of a small body that does not enjoy universal membership is not a solution. A good approach would be to work out democratic and human rights guidelines that countries aspiring to be members should adhere to.

The notion of the "responsibility to protect" is welcome, but its parameters should be well defined to avoid the temptation to interfere in the internal affairs of States. It should be confined to cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and the prior authorization of the Security Council should be obtained before there is such intervention to protect citizens.

Lastly, Security Council reform is overdue. Africa has taken a common position on that issue, which my delegation wholly endorses. We ask for at least two permanent members with a veto and five non-permanent seats.

Mr. Mackay (New Zealand): May I associate New Zealand with the expressions of condolence that have been made on the passing away of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Serene Highness, sovereign Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

At the outset, let me express full support for the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Samoa on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

In his report "In larger freedom", the Secretary-General has laid out the key elements for achieving increased security, prosperity and basic human rights for all. The report is a balanced and concise package of priority actions, focusing on changes that are both vitally needed and achievable.

New Zealand strongly endorses the concept of international peace and security resting on three equal pillars: security, development and human rights. We fully share the Secretary-General's view of a world grounded in collective action where problems, threats and opportunities transcend national boundaries and where the reality of our global interdependence is fully recognized.

I will now highlight a number of recommendations that New Zealand particularly supports.

New Zealand largely supports the Secretary-General's recommendations under section II of his report, "Freedom from want". Strengthened action is needed in order to ensure that the international community delivers on its undertakings to reduce global poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We welcome the emphasis which the recommendations give to the importance of governance and sound, transparent and accountable national strategies to reduce poverty, and support the call for developed countries to provide increased development assistance in support of those. We welcome and fully support the impetus the Secretary-General seeks to inject into the Doha development round, and New Zealand supports particularly the recommendations for an intensified response to combat HIV/AIDS.

Gender equality, the full enjoyment of reproductive health rights, and access to reproductive health information and services are crucial prerequisites for development, and New Zealand welcomes the reflection of those sentiments in the Secretary-General's report. Regarding HIV/AIDS, it is crucial that the summit focus on both prevention and treatment of the disease. Obviously universal access to reproductive health information and services, including through the provision of appropriate and comprehensive information to adolescents, is a vital strategy in combating HIV/AIDS.

New Zealand also welcomes the Secretary-General's focus on the need for enhanced action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change, including through commitments by all major greenhouse gas emitters.

New Zealand is concerned that the particular vulnerabilities and special development needs of small island developing States, as most recently recognized

in the outcomes of the Mauritius International Meeting, received insufficient recognition in the Secretary-General's report. It is important that the special case for small island developing States be fully recognized in the summit outcome.

New Zealand welcomes the acknowledgement that global peace and security require progress on both disarmament and non-proliferation, and the practical proposals put forward to achieve this, such as the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty and strengthening the verification authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

On terrorism, we agree with the Secretary-General's proposal to conclude a comprehensive terrorism convention that defines as an act of terrorism any act intended to seriously harm civilians or non-combatants, with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a Government or international organization to do or abstain from any act.

New Zealand strongly supports the principles of "responsibility to protect", which set out clearly the need for collective action against genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

We particularly endorse the proposal for a peacebuilding commission to address the need for sustained action to prevent countries emerging from war from lapsing back into violence. The strength of a peacebuilding commission would lie in a high-level intergovernmental body that could bring together the main strands of peacebuilding and involve a core membership taken from the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, relevant troop contributors and donors. We look forward to a more fully developed proposal from the Secretary-General on the structure of the commission.

We also strongly support increased resources being provided to the Secretary-General for his vital good-offices function. Those activities, often conducted quietly behind the scenes, are underappreciated as well as underresourced.

It is particularly pleasing to see human rights given such a prominent place in the Secretary-General's report. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that a shadow has been cast on the reputation of the United Nations system as a whole by the declining credibility and lack of professionalism of the Commission on Human Rights. Therefore, we support the proposal for a high-level human rights council. Whether that new council might be a principal organ of the United Nations or a subsidiary body of the General Assembly — both alternatives having advantages and drawbacks — are issues New Zealand would want to look at closely. Either of those alternatives would represent a radical restructuring of the United Nations human rights institutions and would be worthwhile if they were to provide a solution to the problem of politicization which afflicts the Commission on Human Rights. The members of any future human rights council would need to be much more prepared to deal firmly with human rights violations than the current Commission. Only then would the restructuring of the United Nations human rights machinery not be in vain.

Finally, we fully endorse the need for an expanded Security Council that is more representative of the realities of today's world. We agree that a decision needs to be taken on this before September and that, while desirable, a consensus decision may not be possible. We place on record again our view that Japan's contribution to the United Nations needs to be recognized in any enlargement of the Council and that New Zealand continues to oppose any expansion of veto power in the Security Council.

Mr. Sopoaga (Tuvalu): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). First, AOSIS associates itself with the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 on this agenda item.

AOSIS appreciates this opportunity to share our views on the Secretary-General's report and wishes to thank you, Sir, for organizing these consultations, which we believe are timely, in the lead-up to the High-level Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report "In larger freedom", as required by resolution 58/291.

The Secretary-General's analysis in his report has once again drawn attention to issues of great importance. In our view, those issues, together with the recommendations being proposed, require careful study by Member States, considering their far-reaching implications and ramifications. Our comments as a group, therefore, will be confined to general issues of common concern at this stage, but we will be

contributing in depth on the specific issues when they arise during consultations on various clusters of the review.

There is perhaps no other group in the United Nations family to which the relevance of international reforms to enhance sustainable development in particular is more meaningful than to the small island developing States. The unique vulnerability of small island developing States to social and economic forces, and particularly to environmental degradation — as well acknowledged in all major international development agendas, including that of the Millennium Summit — requires the consistent attention and support of the international community.

In that context, AOSIS appreciates the focus in the report on the urgent need for comprehensive and global action on implementation, and the general references to small island developing States, particularly in its chapter on freedom from want, in which it makes reference to trade and climate change. We wish to acknowledge the particular attention given to small island developing States in the section on climate change.

Nevertheless, we need to be very careful about lumping categories of countries together. While we recognize the fact that the Millennium Development Goals makes reference to addressing the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island developing States, we believe that it is inappropriate to gather those different countries into one group and to suggest that there is some sort of action that can address the concerns of them all collectively.

That approach ignores the particular needs and concerns of small island developing States and the fact that one size does not fit all because of their structural handicaps and inherent vulnerability. They should be given the special treatment they deserve to ensure that their concerns are not diluted through clustering with other groups or through the application of the lowest common denominator to all developing countries.

AOSIS appreciates also the recommendation of the Secretary-General on the establishment of a worldwide early warning system for all natural hazards, building on existing national and regional capacity. The catastrophic impact of the 26 December 2004 tsunami was an eye opener in that respect.

We stress the need for small island States to be assisted in the development and strengthening of preparedness and disaster risk reduction, emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, particularly in the field, to enhance the capacity of small island States to address post-disaster human settlement, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

We are most discouraged by the lack of mention anywhere in the report of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. As was pointed out yesterday by the Permanent Representative of Samoa, speaking on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, and supported earlier today by the representative of New Zealand, the Mauritius Strategy not only contains action-oriented, concrete and practical measures to address the areas of concern to small island developing States, but also highlights areas of mutual responsibilities to be pursued by them and by the international community — an elemental principle also strongly advocated as important in the Secretary-General's report. The Strategy is of extreme importance to the peoples of small island developing States as they strive to ensure their sustainable development, security and the protection of their fundamental human right to survive in their islands.

It is our view that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals will be seriously undermined for small island developing States unless appropriate actions to fully implement the Mauritius Strategy are properly considered in the final outcome of the review of the follow-up to the Millennium Summit in September. To that end, it is our intention as Member States to ensure that, over the course of that exercise, that unfortunate oversight is properly addressed.

Speaking now in my national capacity, Tuvalu strongly agrees with the proposal in the Secretary-General's report to strengthen the United Nations organs in order to make the Organization more relevant, meaningful and visible to all Members, including small island countries such as Tuvalu. We agree with the expansion of the Security Council, as proposed in the report.

However, regarding the section on freedom from fear, Tuvalu strongly feels that it lacks one key element. For Tuvalu, security is not simply a matter

related to international terrorism or biological, chemical or nuclear weapons; it also relates to security from environmental harm. In particular, the ongoing threat of climate change is a threat to the very survival of Tuvalu and many small island developing States. Substantive inaction by some large greenhouse-gas emitting countries represents a serious threat to our existence. To that end, we believe that environmental security must be a permanent agenda item of the United Nations bodies, including the Security Council.

Speaking again on behalf of AOSIS, let me assure you, Sir, that we will continue to work cooperatively with you in future consultations to ensure a successful High-level Meeting in September.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands): I would like to begin by expressing the Solomon Islands' condolences to the Holy See on the passing away of Pope John Paul II and to the Principality of Monaco on the demise of Prince Rainer III.

Thank you once again, Sir, for convening this series of meetings as we continue to pursue the challenges of addressing today's threats. Before proceeding further, I would like to associate my delegation with the statements delivered by Ambassador Stafford Neil, Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; by Ambassador Feturi, Permanent Representative of Samoa, on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum group; and by my colleague Ambassador Sopoaga, the Permanent Representative of Tuvalu, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

Solomon Islands acknowledges the Secretary-General's report and values its input to the United Nations reform debate. My delegation wishes to make preliminary overview comments on the report in its national capacity.

Solomon Islands appreciates the emphasis the report places on development, but notes with regret that not enough is said on the special situation of small island developing States and the least developed countries. To make the multilateral system work, United Nations reform must recognize and address the special concerns of the vulnerable Members of this Organization. Such oversight creates weak links within the international system and somewhat isolates the vulnerable from the process. The Solomon Islands, a small island developing State as well as a least developed country, sits on the periphery of the international system. Countries in such positions have come to rely heavily on certain international frameworks to support and sustain their national efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the Brussels Programme of Action and the recent Mauritius Strategy paper, among others.

Against that background, my delegation would like to see the relevant organs of this Organization be performance-based and goal-driven, with clear phases and timelines aimed at monitoring agreed international programmes. That approach corresponds to the decisions made by our leaders at the 2000 Millennium Summit in setting out a series of time-bound Millennium Development Goal targets. To achieve that, resources will have to be made available as soon as practical. The recommendation in the report to have an international financial mechanism to mobilize the necessary resources to implement international and national development strategies and programmes is very much welcome and timely.

The Solomon Islands feels that United Nations reforms should also be sensitive to the political, economic and social status of Member States. The report seems to suggest an approach that is too open for fragile developing States. Such openness should be balanced against State capacities, especially for those that are still undergoing the process of nation-building and seeking a common identity and a sense of national unity. The agreed international programmes speak of their situation; unfortunately, their lack of implementation has placed such countries in an awkward situation.

On the issue of natural disasters, being situated in a volcanic and disaster-prone region, the Solomon Islands welcomes the Secretary-General's call to establish a worldwide early warning system for all natural disasters.

My delegation notes that levels and types of security threats, although interconnected, differ globally. Some threats have received more attention than others. There is a lack of clarity in the report with regard to other threats posed by Member or non-Member States, or within States themselves. Unfortunately, this creates a security vacuum that, if left unattended, could degenerate into a security dilemma, undermining the credibility of the Organization. Solomon Islands believes that there

needs to be an agreed mechanism to address this specific threat within the parameters of the Charter.

My delegation continues to have difficulty with the recommendation for a regional conflict-prevention capacity within the framework of the United Nations. As stated in previous regional and national statements during the most recent informal consultations, a region responding promptly to a regional request by a Member State is in conformity with international law and should be encouraged. Regional cooperation is all about pooling resources and assisting each other in order to preserve and uphold global peace and security. Solomon Islands is making this statement against the backdrop of its experience with the Security Council and as a beneficiary of the regional assistance mission to Solomon Islands.

On the issue of the reform of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat, the views of Solomon Islands were set out during the most recent informal consultations. I will not, therefore, repeat myself. However, my delegation would like to reiterate its call for the Secretariat to re-examine its recruitment process and adopt a mechanism that allows it to effectively reach out to the Organization's diverse membership. The process as it stands discourages many from applying, especially those from developing countries, because of the costs incurred by potential candidates who travel abroad to undertake recruitment exams. We encourage the United Nations to examine the option of holding exams nationally.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you, Mr. President, of my delegation's support for the reform process. We humbly request that the outcome of both the informal consultations and the issues emanating from various cluster discussions be summarized so that we can take stock of where we stand and begin the process of further consensus-building and, where appropriate, negotiations.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): The "In larger freedom" report (A/59/2005) provides a well-balanced and comprehensive basis for making the necessary decisions, during the summit in September, to strengthen the United Nations. It is an excellent basis for our deliberations and discussions. In addition to consultations here in New York, our capitals must be involved at the highest political level in order to achieve the results that are needed.

We have a unique opportunity to take decisive steps towards the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals, and at the same time ensure a safer and more secure world. We need a reformed United Nations in order to strengthen our collective capacity to deal with the multifaceted security situation in the world today and to be effective partners in development. Changes are required to ensure the continued relevance of the United Nations in development activities.

Development, human rights and security are mutually reinforcing. In general, we welcome the increased focus on human rights. The current human rights machinery is in need of reform, and we welcome efforts to elevate the position of human rights in the United Nations system. More emphasis should be placed on technical cooperation at country level in order to achieve practical results. We note with great interest the initiative to establish a Human Rights Council to make our efforts in this field more relevant and effective. We welcome the intention to enable a permanent body to more effectively address evolving human rights situations. However, there is a clear need to develop this idea further in order for us to be able to conclude that it is preferable to a Commission on Human Rights with universal membership.

There will be no peace without development, and no development without peace. It is vital to develop the Organization's capability and capacity for preventive action. It is Norway's view that steps should be taken to strengthen the Secretary-General's role and capacity in preventive diplomacy. The good offices of the Secretary-General can play an even more important role in mediation efforts to end conflict.

The international community must agree on a more consistent and coherent approach to peacebuilding. The proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission could be a step in the right direction. However, the mandate, organization and function of such a commission must be clarified. We look forward to further proposals from the Secretary-General in this respect.

We support the proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Support Office. The main purpose should be to ensure more coherent planning and operational peacebuilding capacities within the United Nations system. The operational functions of such an

office should have priority over Secretariat services for the Peacebuilding Commission.

The current discrepancy between what the Members of the United Nations task the Organization to do and what they contribute financially needs to be addressed. Increasingly complex peacekeeping mandates need to be matched by increased funding — ideally in the form of assessed contributions, or at least more predictably than today. The proposal for a peacebuilding fund could assist in this respect, if such a fund is properly mandated and widely supported with the necessary resources.

When a State ignores its responsibilities towards its population, the international community must not remain passive. The international community has a responsibility to use diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to help protect the human rights of civilian populations. When such means are not sufficient, the Security Council has the responsibility to take action under the Charter, with authority, with efficiency and without hesitation in situations of mass atrocity. We endorse the Secretary-General's appeal to embrace the principle of the "responsibility to protect" as a norm for our collective action in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We must build greater consensus around the need for collective action and early diplomatic response, which can eliminate the need for military intervention.

Reform is needed to ensure the authority, legitimacy and efficiency of the Security Council. The expansion of the Council is necessary, but Norway has some concerns about both models referred to in the Secretary-General's report. We have doubts about the viability of the new regional election groups that form the basis for both models; this will make it much more difficult for smaller countries to be elected — even countries that contribute substantially to the United Nations and make the largest voluntary contributions. The issue of Security Council expansion could possibly be dealt with in a separate process, perhaps in several stages.

The need to improve the humanitarian response system is another key element in the Secretary-General's report, especially as regards response capacity, funding and security and the right of access for humanitarian personnel. We share the Secretary-General's goal of a more predictable humanitarian response in all emergencies and hope that his report and the comprehensive expert review to be finalized this summer will contribute to concrete improvements. Norway will continue to support the strengthening of field coordination structures, including the leadership of the humanitarian coordinators and the role of the country teams, which, where appropriate, should include all Inter-Agency Standing Committee members.

The need for more predictable funding raises a number of complex issues. It would be preferable, in our view, to build on existing mechanisms, such as the Central Emergency Revolving Fund, in order to ensure available funds for rapid disbursement and to avoid delays in acute emergency situations.

The challenge of providing sufficient funds for an adequate international response to all humanitarian needs, including forgotten emergencies, disaster preparedness and so on, should be addressed in the broader perspective of the need to increase the total volume of donor contributions. It goes beyond the mere technical task of setting up a fund, even one of such impressive proportions.

We agree with the basic premise that further joint efforts to meet the MDGs must be based on the Monterrey consensus. Simultaneous efforts in many fields are required to reach the MDGs — on the domestic side, national development strategies, strengthened governance, the rule of law, and measures for combating corruption and securing resource mobilization. These are all areas that would benefit from the participation of civil society and the private sector.

Simultaneous efforts in many fields include resource mobilization and increased official development assistance. We welcome the renewed focus on the 0.7 per cent of official development assistance target. We urge all creditors to support the call for intensified debt relief, without jeopardizing the long-term viability of the international financial institutions. The increasing number of countries that are working hard to create an enabling environment to achieve the MDGs deserve support and positive feedback. Other developing countries may still need the support and attention of the international community and of the United Nations.

To make sure that national planning is substantiated by more predictable funding, we would encourage donors to make predictable multi-year

pledges. More predictable funding of United Nations operational activities should be pursued. This will facilitate better planning and results at the field level. We want to ensure the continued relevance of the United Nations in development activities. The United Nations needs to join forces with other donors in broader undertakings and to harmonize and align its programmes with national strategies.

We welcome the focus on gender equality in development issues, but we would also like to see a focus on gender equality and the role of women in efforts to promote peace and conflict resolution.

We support the importance of gender equality and access to sexual and reproductive health services, both as a critical requirement for women's empowerment and as a component of strong public health systems, as highlighted in the report. We support the recommendation on access to reproductive health care and stress the need for the decision makers in September to reiterate the crucial importance of universal access to reproductive health care by 2015. This is necessary in order to improve the appalling state of maternal health and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS as well as to contribute to women's empowerment.

We are also pleased to note that environmental issues are included. As shown by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment report, the increasing pressure on the ecosystems on which we all depend is putting achievement of the MDGs at risk.

We have before us a package of necessary reforms that in general enjoy the solid support of the United Nations membership. In spite of substantive agreement in the General Assembly, we, too, often note that the implementation of these important decisions is blocked or heavily modified when the budgetary implications are dealt with in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and in the Fifth Committee. We urge Member States to follow up their engagement in the debate leading up to the Summit with a similar commitment in the Fifth Committee to ensure that what we agree on actually becomes a new reality for the United Nations.

We support the Secretary-General's proposals for administrative reforms. We frequently see that Member States are able to micro-manage the Secretariat through the Fifth Committee. No management can be effective under such circumstances. We should aim to limit our management of the Secretariat to giving it broad guidelines, and in return demand transparency, accountability and tougher audits.

Finally, Sir, Norway wishes to pledge its full support to you, in your capacity as the President of the General Assembly, as you take on the crucial task of leading us through consultations concerning the outcome document to be endorsed at the highest level in September. We also support your repeated statements concerning the need for transparency and openness. This is a crucial year for our Organization. We cannot afford to fail, and we must remain ambitious.

This is indeed a time for all Member States to pull together.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): Mr. President, let me thank you once again for giving me the floor to speak on behalf of the 31-member Group of Landlocked Developing Countries. We welcome the way in which you are conducting the current consultations, which, we trust, will be maintained throughout the high-level plenary process. We are confident that, under your competent guidance, our preparatory work for the high-level event will have a successful outcome.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the great efforts he has exerted in making the comprehensive report available for our deliberations in a timely manner. We believe that a number of the analyses and recommendations outlined in the report will provide an important input to the substantive preparations for the high-level event.

We are happy to learn from this report that, over the past two decades, global extreme poverty has been reduced dramatically and that hundreds of millions of men, women and children the world over have been able to emerge from poverty and begin to enjoy improved access to food, health care, education and housing. Yet we cannot but feel concern at the fact that today more than a billion people still live on less than a dollar a day; that, every year, 11 million children die before their fifth birthday; and that 3 million people die annually from AIDS, to cite just a few examples.

We are of the view that the situation can be reversed and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reached only if multilateral cooperation is enhanced, great dynamism and political will shown,

and development embraced by all States as the top priority on the international agenda.

It is gratifying for us to see that MDG 8 in particular is dealt with in the report. That goal is regarded by the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries as the most essential aspect in the achievement of the MDGs. Unfortunately, the targets set out under Goal 8 are not fully covered by the report. In other words, the report, no matter how inclusive it may be, fails fully to address the special needs of the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States, the most vulnerable of all, as the Goal itself calls for.

In our view, the global partnership for development should not be confined to some commitments of the Monterey Consensus. Rather, it should take a broader and more comprehensive approach. Under resolution 58/291, the high-level meeting is mandated to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress made not only towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including the internationally agreed development goals, but also in relation to the outcomes and commitments of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, as well as the global partnership required for their achievement.

Needless to say, one crucial dimension of the global partnership for development is addressing the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Those three vulnerable groups of countries constitute almost half the United Nations membership and represent the poorest segment of the international community. Those countries are lagging far behind the international development mainstream because of the specific structural and geographical challenges that constrain their capacity for development.

The international community has made tremendous efforts to identify their special development needs. The General Assembly has an agenda item on those countries every year. It has convened conferences to identify their special development needs and agree on international support measures to address those problems.

Due to their vulnerabilities, those countries are in very difficult and special situations compared to the rest of the world. That is why there are three distinct programmes of action designed to suit their respective special situations. Therefore, implementation of the Millennium Development Goals should be closely linked to the international efforts to implement the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, the Almaty Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries and the Mauritius Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States. We strongly believe that the successful implementation of those commitments will no doubt significantly contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, allow me further to elaborate on the situation of landlocked developing countries. The Almaty Programme of Action and recent Assembly resolutions recognize that the main developmental constraints for landlocked developing countries are the lack of territorial access to the sea, their remoteness and their isolation from major international markets, prohibitive transit transport costs, heavy dependence on transit services and on the conditions of transit neighbours and the small size of their own markets.

The Almaty Programme of Action offers specific actions grouped according to five priorities, including infrastructure development and maintenance, a transit policy framework and international trade and trade facilitation so that landlocked developing countries can secure access to the sea by all means of transport without hindrance, reduce trade transaction costs, thus improving competitiveness, and addressing problems related to delay and loss along transit routes.

The Almaty Programme of Action also calls on the international community to extend the necessary financial and technical assistance to both landlocked and transit developing countries to ensure the full and effective implementation of those priorities. Implementation of those specific measures should serve as the basis for addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries.

We are pleased to see that the report mentions the need to build the trade competitiveness of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States through implementation of their national Millennium

Development Goals strategies, with an emphasis on investment in agricultural productivity, trade-related infrastructure and competitive export industries. The importance of regional infrastructure and policy cooperation for supporting economic development, particularly for landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, is also stressed.

However, having reviewed the report in its entirety, we regret to say that the issue of landlocked developing countries still needs special emphasis and completeness.

In the implementation of Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals, which addresses the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, a specific set of measurements and indicators should be applied to quantify progress. There is no question that the Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved unless the urgent needs of the three most vulnerable groups of countries, which comprise almost half the international community, are met. Consequently, international assistance should give special attention to those vulnerable groups if the Goals are to be attained by 2015.

The General Assembly has given the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States the important mandate of monitoring the integrated and coordinated follow-up of implementation of the aforementioned programmes of action. That Office should therefore be actively involved in, and duly contribute to, the Millennium Development Goals review process in the interest of those three vulnerable groups. Its primary task should be to establish linkages between the Goals and commitment to those programmes of action and to indicate the ways and means to achieve them.

Let me also touch upon the issue of market access, to which our Group — the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries — attaches great importance. We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation to ask developed countries to commit themselves this year to completing the Doha round of trade negotiations not later than 2006 and, as a first step, to give immediate duty-free and quota-free market access to all exports from least developed countries.

As the Assembly is aware, for landlocked developing countries, market access is no less critical for addressing their special development needs and overcoming the impediments of geography that prevent them from being competitive in the global trading system and from integrating into the global economy. The Almaty Programme of Action, the São Paulo Consensus and General Assembly resolutions have all recognized the need for the trade negotiations of the World Trade Organization to give particular attention to landlocked developing countries' products of special interest. It is of particular importance that resolution 59/245, of 22 December 2004, called for the Doha work programme to consider including landlocked developing countries as part of the group of small and vulnerable economies under the category of small economies. In that regard, we, the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, request that that specific and urgent need of landlocked developing countries be given due attention and consideration.

Against that backdrop, I would like to invite the President to undertake the necessary measures to ensure that the special needs of the most vulnerable segment of the international community be fully addressed during the September high-level event on the Millennium Development Goals and be reflected in the summit outcome, as called for in resolution 59/245. We are certain that the ongoing consultations, including on the issue of global socio-economic development, will contribute to turning the report into a complete set of recommendations to the 2005 high-level plenary meeting. The Group of Landlocked Developing Countries stands ready to make every possible contribution to that process in order to advance its legitimate cause of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): Let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for giving us the opportunity to continue our exchange of views on all aspects of United Nations reform. We would also like to commend you for presenting us with a detailed timetable for our work on the four clusters, with the facilitators you appointed, thus making full use of the remaining time until the summit in September 2005.

Today we are invited to discuss the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). Germany fully aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union by

Ambassador Jean-Marc Hoscheit, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg. Let me stress that we particularly share the sentiment of gratitude to the Secretary-General for his bold and comprehensive approach to the reform agenda.

In his report the Secretary-General addresses interconnected challenges and threats and suggests that a piecemeal, fragmented approach will not bring about the required solutions. He calls on all States and all regions to cooperate in developing the required strategies. While he demands much from all of us, his proposals aim at an outcome in which every region will be able to find gains and advantages.

In addition to the comments made on behalf of the European Union by the representative of Luxembourg, I would like to touch briefly on three points: first, the way forward to reach the Millennium Development Goals and to achieve freedom from want; secondly, the need to strengthen the rule of law as a prerequisite for the freedom to live in dignity; and, thirdly, the need for Security Council reform. We have had occasion to express our views on the latter topic in previous debates, and we also discussed it with a good part of the membership in an event we organized together with Brazil, India and Japan last week. I am therefore sure, Sir, that you would feel that a national statement by Germany on reform issues would be incomplete without a few words on the Security Council.

In his report the Secretary-General stresses the importance of development as an issue in its own right and also reminds us of the link between security and development. He rightly calls on both developing countries and donor countries to do their part for development. Bilaterally as well as in the framework of the European Union, Germany is constantly increasing its efforts to meet that responsibility. The German Government's response to the tsunami catastrophe — for which it pledged more than $650 million, plus another $650 million in private donations — and Germany's commitment to the goals of the President Lula's September 2004 summit on fighting poverty and hunger are precisely examples of such efforts.

We know that more will have to be done to achieve the commitments of Monterrey and to reach the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income in official development assistance (ODA). The German Chancellor and the Foreign Minister have recently announced a road map for the timely implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. By increasing its official development assistance to 0.35 per cent in 2006, and to 0.5 per cent in 2010, Germany will achieve the 0.7 per cent target in three steps by 2014. As we have a very large economy, that involves tens of billions of dollars in additional assistance.

Germany has also indicated that we are sympathetic to the proposal to establish an International Finance Facility. We intend to free up resources for development — particularly in Africa — by rescheduling and easing the debt burden of developing countries.

With regard to the rule of law, we agree fully with the Secretary-General's view that the rule of law is the essential foundation for political stability, social progress and sustained development. Nobody will invest in an economy, a society or a State if there is no rule of law and no respect for basic human rights. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's proposal to create a dedicated Rule of Law Assistance Unit in the proposed Peacebuilding Support Office to assist national efforts to re-establish the rule of law in conflict and post-conflict societies. That proposal is very much in line with an initiative by Jordan, Finland and Germany that was submitted some months ago to the Secretary-General. We feel that it should be implemented as soon as possible, even independently of a decision on the Peacebuilding Commission, which we support.

With regard to Security Council reform, I want to make two points. First, the time for that reform is ripe. In his report the Secretary-General stresses that Member States should reach a decision on that important issue before September. The reform momentum must be used. Let us not fool ourselves: everybody knows that consensus on that complex issue is not possible. The Secretary-General is therefore right when he says that consensus might be desirable but that its absence should not be taken as a pretext for inaction. The Charter itself supports that view in Article 108, which provides for a two-thirds majority vote for changes to the Charter. In my view, to pretend that such a vote is divisive or undemocratic reveals a strange understanding of democracy, because taking decisions through a vote is the daily business of all democratic parliaments. And let us further not fool ourselves: if we miss this chance for reform, it will not come back in the coming decades. If we do not heed

the Secretary-General's advice to decide before September, that will notably cast a shadow on the September summit, because the public perception in all our countries will be that we have not addressed one of the major reform issues. Another postponement of a decision, after 12 years of discussion, will mean the failure of our efforts. Our position is clear: we are working on a draft resolution on reform that should be put to the vote in May or June.

Secondly, the elements for a solution are on the table. After discussion of the proposals of the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) in several General Assembly debates, there is a clear trend in favour of an enlargement of the Council in both permanent and non-permanent seats, with some modifications to the proposed model A. One modification that enjoys broad support — including ours — is to maintain the existing regional groups. Concerning the category of non-permanent seats, that issue has been touched upon by several delegations. We favour an increase in seats for Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Latin American and Caribbean States.

We remain open to ideas on many of the reform issues. But we will not make false compromises in order to accommodate the very specific national interests of a very few. Only enlargement in both categories will bring about the structural change of the Security Council needed to reflect today's geopolitical realities and to strengthen the Council's legitimacy and effectiveness. The Security Council has to become not only more effective and more representative, but also more transparent and more inclusive in its working methods. Reform of working methods will therefore an integral part of our reform project. We would like to encourage and invite Member States to continue the dialogue with the group of countries composed of Brazil, India, Japan and Germany and to work with the facilitators appointed by the President of the General Assembly to make the Security Council more representative, more transparent and more responsive to today's challenges.

Let me conclude by saying that we should create the necessary building blocks for the implementation of the report of the Millennium Project — the Sachs report — and the report of the High-level Panel as condensed in the recommendations of the Secretary-General, which combine the desirable with the feasible. We lend our full support to the President of the General Assembly, to the facilitators and, last but not least, to the Secretary-General. Supporting their efforts will make the summit the success the United Nations needs and deserves.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): We welcome the reform report (A/59/2005) before the General Assembly and approach it on the basis of the conviction that the recognition of the links among all the major topics leads inevitably to having all issues addressed in an outcome document. At the same time, we will continue focusing our national efforts on those areas where we feel we can best make a contribution, namely, human rights, the rule of law and Security Council reform. We very much look forward to the more in-depth work that will be carried out on the four clusters identified by the President.

The September summit will first and foremost be an opportunity to reinvigorate the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, with development issues at its core. The outcome document must therefore include a clear reaffirmation and commitment to the development consensus as agreed upon in Monterrey and Johannesburg and as spelled out in the Millennium Development Goals, on the basis of concrete agreed steps to achieve those goals. Both developed and developing countries must step up their efforts to fulfil their respective responsibilities.

For us developed countries that means significantly stepping up our official development assistance (ODA) and establishing timetables to reach the agreed ODA target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income. Concrete measures are needed to fight extreme poverty, foster sustainable debt relief, open up markets, promote gender equality, fight major diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, act against climate change and reduce the risks emanating from natural disasters. Only a bold breakthrough in 2005 will save us from missing the opportunity to implement the Millennium Development Goals, enhance global security and save the lives of millions.

Regarding the area of peace and security, we fully endorse the call for a new security consensus. The summit must acknowledge the diversity and interdependence of all security threats and the shared responsibility of all of us for one another's security. The Charter of the United Nations remains the legal framework for our collective action, within which we must commit ourselves to develop and implement

comprehensive strategies against those threats and to act on a number of levels.

We must act urgently to implement the Millennium Development Goals, in order to make better progress in eradicating the scourges threatening human security and the lives of millions of people worldwide.

We must revitalize and continue to develop our legal framework for non-proliferation and disarmament, from the whole range of weapons of mass destruction to small arms and light weapons, whose death toll around the world qualifies them as the real weapons of mass destruction.

We should endorse the proposed United Nations counter-terrorism strategy and its comprehensive approach, which includes the defence of human rights in the fight against terrorism. We should commit ourselves to finalizing the work on a comprehensive convention on terrorism in the course of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, and work for the speedy entry into force of the recently adopted draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

We must accept, and act on, our responsibility to protect people everywhere in the world in the event of genocide and other mass atrocities that national Governments are unwilling, or unable, to prevent. We must reaffirm the Charter's provisions on the use of force, including Article 51. That legal framework should be complemented by agreed criteria on the legitimacy of military force, which we understand not to be legally binding, as a means of enhancing the Security Council's accountability to Member States in its decision-making on those topics. Furthermore, we must act on the Secretary-General's recommendations in the areas of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, in particular the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission.

Protecting the rule of law at the international and national levels and protecting the vulnerable are at the heart of a strong multilateral system. The summit should clearly reaffirm the commitment to the rule of law at both levels, and we must also agree on concrete measures to strengthen the rule of law in the daily work of the United Nations. We should mainstream the concept throughout the United Nations system and start off by ensuring in particular that the United Nations itself respects the concept.

Decisive action is warranted in that respect, from preventing abusive and criminal behaviour by United Nations personnel to ensuring due process and basic standards of humanity for individuals targeted by Security Council sanctions. The summit must result in an unequivocal reaffirmation of the commitment of all Member States to international law and further be seized as an opportunity for States to sign and ratify the most important multilateral treaties, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and other treaties for the protection of civilians.

We welcome the Secretary-General's suggestion that the important role of the International Court of Justice be reaffirmed and that a process be started to strengthen the work of the Court. In addition to practical measures, Liechtenstein would particularly welcome increased recourse to the advisory function of the Court, including through referrals by the Secretary-General.

The success of our actions on almost all of the issues I have mentioned is linked to the efficiency and legitimacy of the United Nations bodies dealing with them. All the main organs of the United Nations require major reform efforts. While many believe that United Nations reform cannot be complete without Security Council reform, it needs to be emphasized also that United Nations reform cannot be complete without General Assembly reform.

We welcome the bold recommendation to replace the Commission on Human Rights with a Human Rights Council. The summit should make a decision in principle on this important question and establish a process, including a timetable, which will clarify the details of such a new body, including its mandate, modalities for elections, and its relationship with other organs.

We were glad to hear that the Secretary-General expressed the same view on the process when he addressed the Commission on Human Rights today in Geneva. In our view, the council should be a principal organ of the United Nations, and its size and modalities for election should allow for a diverse membership representing the whole range of Member States, small and large. The council should become the main forum for human rights discussions and replace, not duplicate, the respective work of the General Assembly. To end duplication must be one of our primary goals in this area, whatever the final institutional structure, as we

outlined in our national proposal on the reform of the intergovernmental human rights bodies. We fully agree that the council should be in session throughout the year in order to be able to respond quickly to emergencies.

On the reform of the Security Council, we reiterate the need for a comprehensive reform, with strong emphasis given to a substantial outcome on the working methods of the Council. A larger Council will not, in itself, be a better Council, and many of the aspects of the work of the Council under discussion are related to its working methods. We also continue to believe that the membership should remain open-minded vis-à-vis enlargement models that go beyond those contained in the report submitted by the Secretary-General.

The General Assembly needs another major overhaul in order to be restored to its rightful place, as enunciated in the Millennium Declaration. Practical measures — and they have been on the table for a long time — are important to that end. But the decisive element is the resolve of States to use this organ of the Organization in a manner consistent with the role given to it under the Charter.

Finally, we support the Secretary-General's proposal on the strengthening of the Secretariat. Increased authority and flexibility for the Secretary-General to manage his staff and operations must go hand in hand with strengthened management practices and accountability in particular. Member States should work determinedly with the Secretary-General to improve budget and human resource rules in order to better tailor them to the needs of the Organization.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): Mr. President, like so many colleagues before me, I should like to start by gratefully expressing our appreciation for the thoughtful report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom". I should like also to voice our appreciation of the manner in which you are handling the organization of our important work based on that report. Furthermore, we highly appreciate the work of the facilitators you appointed.

Iceland has on a number of occasions stressed its commitment to the process set in train by the Secretary-General with the establishment of the High-level Panel and the mandating of the Millennium Project. The Secretary-General's incisive and comprehensive report is indeed the culmination of a vital initial phase of preparing the groundwork for heads of State to address the key issues of world poverty and security, and of how the multilateral system can best help tackle those challenges in future.

We fully support the central tenets of the Secretary-General's report — that development, security and human rights are inextricably linked. While Iceland will return to the relevant chapters with more detailed comments in forthcoming debates, I would like to highlight one or two issues at this juncture.

Development is a shared responsibility of the developing and developed countries, and the report makes that very clear. But progress can be achieved only if countries themselves take the lead for their own development. The emphasis on Africa is also particularly welcome. Iceland aims to double its development aid by 2009 and has concentrated the bulk of its bilateral development efforts on Africa.

Iceland also supports the emphasis on an open and equitable trade system to allow developing countries to take a full part in the globalized economy.

I would like to praise in particular the contribution which the Secretary-General makes to the establishment of a security consensus, the core of which is the interdependence of all States in addressing threats to our security, be they in the form of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, disease, environmental degradation or poverty.

I would also like to praise the proposal for a definition of terrorism. Such a definition will certainly facilitate the struggle against this global menace.

Iceland fully supports the strong emphasis on the role of human dignity — comprising human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We also agree that, in order to ensure human dignity, we must be ready to embrace the responsibility to protect and to provide the judicial mechanisms — particularly the International Criminal Court and other regional courts with international mandates — to punish those who offend against human dignity.

The Secretary-General has made some bold proposals for the reform and reinvigoration of the United Nations. Iceland will lend its active support to pushing forward those proposals with the aim of making the United Nations an Organization which can continue to be the nexus of the multilateral system.

Iceland looks forward to a constructive, open and forward-looking discussion and will do its utmost to contribute to the making of far-reaching and effective changes on the basis of the excellent preparatory work carried out under the leadership of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova (GUUAM).

The GUUAM Group welcomes the submission by the Secretary-General of his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). The report is a highly important contribution to the ongoing process of preparing for the United Nations summit in September. We agree with its approach regarding the need to address and take action in the three priority and interlinked areas of development, security and human rights and to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for pursuing those priorities.

The report's package of proposals and recommendations for decisions by heads of State or Government, although not exhaustive, could be considered as the basis for our further substantive and target-oriented work. However — as is probably the case with every other delegation in this Hall — we must note that the report does not fully reflect the views and concerns expressed by the GUUAM Group and its member States during previous informal debates on a number of issues, including Security Council expansion, the need to address the specific concerns of countries with economies in transition and the problem of human trafficking.

While the report is being thoroughly studied in our capitals, and in anticipation of the detailed discussions to be held on the various clusters of issues in the coming weeks and months, I would like to make several comments at this Assembly meeting.

We support the call for placing the Millennium Development Goals at the core of national development strategies tailored to local realities. Respect for human rights, a vibrant civil society, an entrepreneurial private sector and good governance at all levels are essential if those strategies are to be implemented. In the meantime, we highlight the importance of a balanced approach in reviewing the roles and responsibilities as well as the commitments and contributions of all stakeholders in this process.

We strongly believe that, as provided for by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the specialized agencies, regional commissions and international financial institutions should continue to provide assistance to economies in transition to ensure that they are fully and effectively integrated into the world economy. The success stories of some transitional economies do not guarantee sustained development for all such economies.

The GUUAM Group welcomes the attention devoted in the report to fighting HIV/AIDS and other diseases in the most harshly affected regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. We also emphasize the need for a renewed focus on those countries in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus that have recently experienced the steepest rise in the spread of HIV. Recognizing that a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS requires long-term and sustainable financial resources, we call upon international donors to live up to their commitments to replenish the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The GUUAM Group expresses its support for the new vision of collective security that addresses the security concerns of all States: a threat to one is a threat to all. We believe that that approach could bridge the existing gap between divergent views on the issue of security.

We fully agree that there is a need to revitalize the multilateral frameworks for handling the threats posed by nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and to restore confidence in the multilateral mechanisms for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Disarmament and non-proliferation are interconnected, particularly with regard to nuclear weapons. Progress in both areas is urgently required. Therefore, the GUUAM Group calls for more active use of existing initiatives aimed at preventing the illicit trafficking of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and of their means of delivery. The role of the Security Council in that regard is extremely important.

The challenge of combating terrorism requires sustained, long-term and global action. Therefore, we welcome the presentation by the Secretary-General of a comprehensive United Nations counter-terrorism strategy. We are of the view that the promotion of closer cooperation and coordination with international,

regional and subregional organizations should be an essential part of such a strategy. The GUUAM Group hopes that the proposed elements of a definition of terrorism could facilitate the conclusion of work on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

As was argued in the recent report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565), the use of force is a vital component of any workable system of collective security. The GUUAM Group considers that the United Nations Charter clearly prohibits the threat or use of force against any State except in the exercise of the inherent right of self-defence, as reflected in Article 51, and in carrying out measures authorized by the Security Council. Therefore, we agree that it is important to define and adopt criteria for the legitimate authorization by the Council of the use of force. Situations in which national authorities are unwilling or unable to protect their populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity may require effective action by the international community in accordance with international law, including enforcement measures in exceptional circumstances. We believe that such measures can be taken only as a last resort and under the explicit mandate of the Security Council.

We do not believe that the recommendations put forward in the Secretary-General's report with regard to institutional reform in the area of human rights offer a magical solution to all our problems; nor, in fact, were they intended to do so. But we certainly believe that they offer a good point of departure for the creative and innovative measures that are needed to reinvigorate the human rights machinery of the United Nations. We fully support the idea of further mainstreaming human rights into the overall activities of the United Nations system. In that regard, we are looking forward to further details regarding the establishment and functioning of a Human Rights Council, as proposed by the High-level Panel, together with further details concerning the mandate of such a body, its membership and its relationship to other United Nations institutions.

In the same vein, we believe that the idea of creating a Democracy Fund at the United Nations to provide funding and technical assistance to countries seeking to establish or strengthen their democracy deserves to be considered positively by Member States. We also take a positive view of the proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission in order to fill the existing institutional vacuum in that very important area. We look forward to further details and discussion on that issue.

The GUUAM Group associate itself with the statement delivered by the Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States on the issue of the reform of the Security Council. The allocation of at least one additional non-permanent seat to the Eastern European Group, whose composition has more than doubled in the last 15 years, is an important precondition for our support of any reform proposal. We appreciate very much the statement made today by the representative of Germany, in which he clearly supported the position of the Eastern European States. In line with the position of the Secretary-General, we call for greater involvement in the Security Council's decision-making process by those countries contributing most to the Organization in military, diplomatic and financial terms.

GUUAM member States agree that the enlargement of the Security Council should go hand in hand with the reform of its working methods, in order to increase its efficiency and transparency and to strengthen the democratic and accountable nature of that body. It is also important to ensure that the activities of the Security Council are relevant to the concerns of Member States, and that its decisions are implemented.

As has been mentioned on several occasions, reform of the United Nations should of course not be limited to the enlargement of the Security Council. We therefore fully agree that there is a need to revitalize the activities of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative body of the United Nations, and to enable it to play that role effectively. It is also important to strengthen and enhance the relevancy of the Economic and Social Council.

Last but not least, the GUUAM Group fully agrees with the Secretary-General when he points out, in the introduction to his report that "none of the proposals advanced [in the report] obviate the need for urgent action this year to make progress in resolving protracted conflicts that threaten regional and global stability" (*ibid., para. 5*). That should be done on the basis of the norms and principles of international law,

in particular the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States.

People all over the world hope that at the September summit our leaders will be able to breathe new life into the United Nations and to adopt a package of far-reaching decisions aimed at strengthening collective action in response to worldwide challenges. It is now the responsibility of us, the Member States, to mobilize our efforts in order to ensure that those expectations are met. You, Mr. President, may count on the full support and cooperation of GUUAM member States in your noble efforts to achieve tangible results during the coming months.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for providing us with a procedural framework and a clear road map for our exchange of views on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005).

My delegation fully associates itself with the statements made by the Permanent Representatives of Jamaica and Malaysia, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), respectively, as well as with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Malawi on behalf of the Group of African States. I shall therefore limit myself to commenting on some issues that we consider significant in view of the observations and recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General, which, as previous speakers have already mentioned, contains bold and innovative ideas. We thank the Secretary-General for that far-reaching and important report.

The Secretary-General's report provides us with analysis and recommendations for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It concludes that the Goals are achievable within the agreed time frame, provided that Member States engage and that they identify economic cooperation within a global partnership.

My delegation acknowledges the recognition of the principle of national ownership with regard to identifying and establishing development priorities at the national level through programmes, plans and strategies. Those represent the framework for national action and must be adequately supported by the international community. Part and parcel of international support for action on national priorities includes meaningful measures on means for implementation, in particular those related to commitments made but not honoured, reform of the trade regime and debt relief.

The lessons we have learned from our own experience lead us to conclude that achieving the Millennium Development Goals poses specific challenges to countries emerging from conflict. The devastation and destruction brought about by the prevalence of armed conflict broadens and enlarges the scope for national and international action. Furthermore, the prevalence of peace creates an opportunity for a turning point, an opportunity that can be seized thought capital-intensive programmes for the social and economic infrastructure needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to sustain peace.

A different, yet fundamental, set of challenges affect least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries. Geography, nature and income impair the ability of those countries to achieve the agreed development goals, as recognized in the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and expanded upon in the Brussels Programme of Action, the Almaty Programme of Action and, more recently, the Mauritius Strategy. Those represent agreed frameworks for international cooperation, but lack meaningful implementation. Reforming the Organization must therefore strengthen its ability to foster international cooperation so that humankind can enjoy development and security.

Furthermore, it is clear from the Secretary-General's report that the external debt burden is having an adverse effect on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and that Africa's debt, in particular, is unsustainable. Debt servicing diverts resources from development, contributing to the net transfer of resources from the poor to the rich. To reverse this trend, the international community must address debt sustainability in highly indebted and low-income countries, particularly in Africa.

We agree fully with the Secretary-General's assessment that there is a need for a new international consensus on the future of collective security. In this context, in his report the Secretary-General raised

important questions and made interesting and far-reaching observations and recommendations. However, we are of the view that much more needs to be done in order to overcome institutional weaknesses in dealing with such issues.

Turning to institutional reforms, let me say that we consider that the General Assembly's authority and role under the Charter must be effectively restored. We therefore stress the importance of resolution 58/126, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

The proposal to create a new Human Rights Council to replace the Commission on Human Rights certainly needs further consideration. However, whatever decision is taken regarding the size, nature, mandate and location of such a council, we are of the view that the system of independent human rights experts and rapporteurs, who make an exceptional contribution to the advancement of the economic, social and cultural perspectives of human rights, should be maintained.

Much has been said about the self-evident reality that peace and development are mutually reinforcing. Paragraph 263 of the report of the High-level Panel (A/59/565) recommends that the Security Council, acting under article 29 of the Charter and after consultations with the Economic and Social Council, establish a Peacebuilding Commission. Furthermore, paragraphs 264 and 265 provide us with some ideas about the core functions, size and membership of such a commission.

While the Secretary-General has not mentioned whether or not the Peacebuilding Commission will take advantage of the decision-making process of the Security Council, we welcome the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission, whose central role should be to support national efforts for post-conflict reconstruction and economic and social rehabilitation.

Finally, on Security Council reform, let me say that African countries have long urged the expansion of the Security Council in order to make it more representative and to enhance its transparency and inclusiveness. The Ezulwini Consensus is clear in this regard. However, if, for whatever reason, we are not able to reach consensus, that must not become a justification for deferring action on the very purpose of the September summit: the achievement of meaningful progress and measures to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

In conclusion, let me say that we believe that the Secretary-General's report, "In larger freedom", based on the report of High-level Panel, and the report of the United Nations Millennium Project, represent a far-reaching step forward in identifying core issues to place before our leaders in September.

We look forward to engaging in further dialogue in such meetings, and to working with the facilitators that you, Mr. President, have appointed. Finally, I would like to say that we are, indeed, very appreciative of the transparent and inclusive way in which you are conducting these important consultations.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): Let me begin by expressing the condolences of the people and the Government of Indonesia to the Holy See on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, who died last week. In addition to being a spiritual leader, Pope John Paul II was a prominent figure in the advancement of peace and of understanding among people of different backgrounds. We join other delegations in praying for the repose of his soul. We would also like to express our condolences to the people and the Government of the Principality of Monaco on the passing this week of Prince Rainier III.

My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this important series of meetings to prepare for the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to take place in September 2005. We thank the Secretary-General for his report, "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005).

Let me state at the outset that my delegation subscribes to the statements made earlier by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. My delegation shares the view that the report before us does not sufficiently acknowledge the positions of those two bodies, to which we belong. We will go into greater detail with regard to our positions during the second stage of these discussions, which you, Sir, have proposed that we carry out in thematic clusters later this month.

The report of the Secretary-General contains a wide assortment of positions and recommendations

capable of changing the character of the United Nations and improving the lives of the peoples of the world in a fundamental way. In this regard, we are grateful to him for his observation that, in the twenty-first century, States and their collective institutions must advance the cause of larger freedom by ensuring freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity.

It is of great significance that he stresses the relationship between development and security quite plainly, stating that

> "There will be no development without security and no security without development. And both development and security also depend on respect for human rights and the rule of law". (*A/59/2005, annex, para. 2*)

That balance must be respected and maintained. It is also significant that the Secretary-General stresses the importance of multilateralism:

> "No State can stand wholly alone in today's world. We all share responsibility for each other's development and security. Collective strategies, collective institutions and collective action are indispensable". (*Ibid., para. 3*)

We are further pleased at a number of recommendations and proposals that the Secretary-General makes in the report with a view to accomplishing this vision, although we have reservations about a number of them and look forward to receiving clarifications on them. I will devote the rest of my statement to some issues under specific clusters.

My delegation admits to a measure of disappointment with some of the contents of the report in terms of the measures for achieving this vision. In the broader outlook, while we do not deny the legitimacy of the issues raised, we believe that more space and greater emphasis should have been given to the development concerns of the developing countries on their merits. Presenting those concerns within a security framework has served to underline security as the priority issue. For developing countries, development is the sure foundation upon which lasting peace and security rest, and it should be pointed out that there is no Millennium Development Goal that directly and explicitly focuses on security.

I wish to point out that achieving internationally agreed goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, demands that we commit ourselves to creating a conducive environment at the national and international levels that would pull together the necessary financial resources to pursue such a commitment. We have actually taken two very crucial steps forward: determining the specific actions that need to be taken and identifying the tools needed to realize those actions through the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Monterrey Consensus.

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation outlines the key actions crucial to development that need urgent attention. The Plan's comprehensiveness merits our acknowledgement that it should be our principal guide for development financing. The Monterrey Consensus outlines the tools that can transform the Plan of Implementation into concrete results. Those commitments, along with the Millennium Declaration, embody a fully funded, comprehensive development agenda.

However, we would argue that attaching significance only to the MDGs is similar to giving attention to specific trees rather than focusing on the entire forest. We therefore believe that the MDGs should not be treated as the full embodiment of development, which incorporates much wider issues such as the systemic inequity of the international financial architecture and the use of tariffs to frustrate the will of developing countries to engage in international trade. Those commitments were made in good faith and must be honoured by implementation. To ignore those commitments would undermine the credibility and reliability of the international negotiating process. Indonesia is therefore concerned about the new heavy emphasis being placed on developing countries assuming greater responsibility for their own development, as if to suggest that they are immune from the impact of the global community in pursuing that goal.

That all developing countries should commit themselves to national development strategies, as proposed by the report, and mobilize their domestic resources to meet development goals, especially the MDGs, cannot be contradicted. However, possession of resources will determine the nature of the plans formulated to implement the MDGs. Without available resources for implementation, development plans are reduced to mere wish lists.

Indeed, all signs clearly indicate that developing countries have already begun to assume greater responsibility for their own development based on national and international realities. The request for them to commit now to national strategies to achieve the MDGs by 2015 is thus to urge them to continue going in the direction in which they are going. However, some developing countries — in particular the heavily indebted poor countries — face severe limitations with regard to the mobilization of resources necessary for their own development. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to endorse the Secretary-General's position concerning the need to complete the Doha round and the compelling need to discharge that development promise.

While developing countries agree that domestic resources need to be mobilized as much as possible, it is also important that developed countries promote international trade in the interest of development, increase official development assistance (ODA) and work towards sustainable debt financing and external debt relief. Indonesia will certainly present its views and proposals regarding those issues in more concrete terms during the thematic discussions.

Indonesia would like once again to express its gratitude to the international community for its support following the recent natural disasters in our country, namely, the earthquake and tsunami of 26 December 2004 and the earthquake we experienced in Nias Island just over a week ago. In that connection, we would like to declare our support for the Secretary-General's recommendation for an early warning system for all natural hazards, building on existing national and regional capacity.

With reference to the cluster entitled "Freedom from fear", contrary to our expectations, the report takes some positions that we feel ought to have been more balanced. We believe, for instance, that its definition of nuclear proliferation, which focuses on the general spread of nuclear weapons while avoiding the more critical issue of vertical proliferation and qualitative development, is difficult to comprehend. My delegation would like to stress that nuclear-weapon States should fully implement their commitments and obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), including the 13 practical steps, with a view to achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Turning to the subject of terrorism, and speaking as a nation that has twice been victimized by it, we fully support every effort to combat it. However, we find a definition that ignores the legitimate struggle of peoples who are under colonialism or foreign occupation to be limited in its understanding. We support a counter-terrorism strategy by which that scourge would be attacked at the root level. We also feel that the time is now ripe for the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on terrorism on the basis of the views that have been expressed by Member States. The conclusion of the draft convention on nuclear terrorism earlier this month by the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 provides momentum for consensus on the definition of terrorism, provided that States are willing to demonstrate flexibility.

We have stated that we are favourably disposed to the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission to assume post-conflict responsibilities. We feel that that is an important idea that deserves careful consideration. We look forward to further work on its implementation.

My delegation supports the Secretary-General in urging that heads of State or Government recommit to supporting the rule of law, human rights and democracy. We hold the rule of law to be a fundamental United Nations principle. There is need to strengthen existing international norms and rules, as well as the implementation of treaties and conventions.

With reference to the "responsibility to protect", it is our view that, although there are some moral justifications for the Secretary-General's recommendation in that regard, we feel that a number of political and legal questions remain to be addressed.

We have similar concerns relating to the recommendation concerning the use of force. We will be presenting a more elaborate analysis of our position on that topic too during the thematic stage of these deliberations, later in the month. For now, let me say that, with reference to Article 51 of the Charter, it is the position of Indonesia that great care must be taken to avoid any rewriting or reinterpretation of that article.

We support the commitment of the Secretary-General with regard to strengthening the United Nations. However, we would like to reiterate that reform of the Organization must be seen as a process and undertaken as a systemic exercise, and must never

assume the form solely of the reform of the Security Council. Institutional or systemic reform means that the exercise must be implemented not as a selective, segmented undertaking, but must include all the principal organs of the Organization.

With reference to the Security Council itself, we are not convinced that all the options for its restructuring have been exhausted. Furthermore, it is important to say that there is still a need to improve the working methods of the Council to make it more transparent, inclusive and effective. The reforms must also strengthen multilateralism.

Turning to the Economic and Social Council, it is our view that the important role of that body in dealing with security challenges having economic causes has been overlooked. There is need to rescue the Economic and Social Council from the passive role it has been forced to play in recent times when compared with the vigorous roles of the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization in the economic and financial fields. Such limitations on the Economic and Social Council are not consistent with its Charter mandate. We believe that the Council serves as a democratic safeguard for proper decision-making in those fields. Its role should therefore be expanded and centralized, not undermined.

The report also proposes the replacement of the Commission on Human Rights with a Human Rights Council characterized by limited and selective membership. We are uncertain that that proposal addresses the various controversial issues concerning human rights in the Organization, and we look forward to discussing it further.

With reference to the proposals relating to the reform of the Secretariat, we believe that a lot of questions have yet to be answered, and we look forward to clarifications in that regard.

Finally, Mr. President, let me once again express my delegation's support for your commitment and leadership as we prepare for next September's high-level plenary meeting. We recognize that this will be a challenging five-month period, and we pledge our support and complete participation. We hope that our undertakings within this period will re-energize the United Nations and its membership in support of the Charter and the Millennium Declaration.

One point, however, must be clear. What is at stake here is the future of the peoples of the world, which look to the United Nations for direction and trust in its leadership. It is important that the outcome document that the leaders will sign next September not only be bold and strong but also represent the clear views of Member States and the yearnings of their peoples.

The report, specifically the annex of recommendations with which it ends, also creates the impression that September is the deadline for action on its contents. We would urge instead that the report be seen and treated as a comprehensive and balanced package and as a useful beginning to the process of change and consensus-building aimed at facilitating the implementation of the outcome of the Millennium Declaration, which emphasizes development, especially poverty eradication. There is therefore a need for deadline flexibility, so that immediate action can be taken on those matters that enjoy widespread support and in order to allow time for the review of controversial proposals that do not enjoy consensus or agreement.

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to thank you for your efforts to hold consultations with United Nations Member States in accordance with the road map. Kazakhstan reaffirms its readiness to be actively involved in these consultations, which are designed to reach agreement on the decisions to be adopted at the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in September 2005. We also support the Secretary-General's initiative to appoint four envoys to ensure full-scale and high-quality preparations for the historic United Nations summit.

Kazakhstan welcomes the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all". The report contains a comprehensive programme for the restructuring of the system of international relations and of the United Nations itself. In our view, it has laid the foundation for a comprehensive package of decisions to ensure international peace and security, achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and carry out an institutional reform of the United Nations. The document lists practical recommendations to enhance efforts relating to the triad of development, freedom and peace.

Kazakhstan shares the view that there is an inextricable link between these three contemporary objectives. Yet we have to emphasize that the framework for collective security, peace, and the freedom to live in dignity can be established only by creating conditions for the development of States.

Issues of development and related challenges involving the timely and effective achievement of the Millennium Development Goals should continue to be the focus of attention on the part of the international community. We believe that the summit to be convened in September 2005 in New York should reaffirm the thrust and significance of the final documents of the major multilateral forums and conferences held in Monterrey and Johannesburg, as well as in Brussels, Almaty and Mauritius.

As a landlocked country, Kazakhstan encourages the full consideration of the interests of that category of countries. In that context, we call for the unconditional implementation of the 2003 Almaty Programme of Action, as it relates to decision-making in the area of economic development, international trade and interregional cooperation.

Economic and social development constitutes a key element of a preventive approach to collective security involving the development of an integrated United Nations strategy of response to emerging crisis situations.

Kazakhstan welcomes the initiative to introduce a counter-terrorism strategy that provides for the elimination of the causes of terrorism and its renunciation as a tactical means of attracting political attention. The success of that strategy will depend largely on the strengthening of international, regional and subregional cooperation in the fight against international terrorism and on the growing role of regional organizations in dealing with this evil. However, building the capacity of States to prevent terrorist operations and recruitment by terrorists is the most effective element of a comprehensive strategy.

Kazakhstan calls for an early agreement on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism in order to develop further an integrated legal mechanism to counter international terrorism. We welcome the completion of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 aimed at drafting and preparing for the adoption of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

We would like to note the timeliness of the recommendation concerning the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission's main task should be to prevent the recurrence of any situation in which the lack of a peacebuilding strategy leads to an escalation of internal conflicts and to States' losing further their capacity to perform, in an effective and responsible way, their sovereign functions. That Commission should report to the Security Council or to the Economic and Social Council, depending on the stage that a given conflict has reached.

Kazakhstan believes also that the decision to use force to safeguard international peace and security should be taken as a last resort and be based on reliable and objective information.

We would like to stress the relevance of the provision concerning the need to reaffirm Member States' commitment to the United Nations Charter in order successfully to meet the full range of challenges involving security, economic and social development, and the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations and its principal organs and agencies.

We share the view that it would be a mistake to treat human rights as though there were a trade-off to be made between them and such goals as security or development. In that context, comprehensive compliance by all countries with multilateral human rights treaties and the adaptation of domestic legislation to existing international standards in this area are key factors in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Secretary-General's proposal to replace the Commission on Human Rights with a standing Human Rights Council, as a principal organ of the United Nations or subsidiary body of the General Assembly, needs, in our view, further in-depth study.

Kazakhstan believes that the reform of the three principal organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — in order to ensure a balance in their work and their mutual strengthening, is a matter of principle. The General Assembly should have a central position as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations.

Kazakhstan has repeatedly voiced its continued support for the expansion of the Security Council in the categories of both permanent and non-permanent members, on the basis of equitable geographical representation and of respect for the sovereign equality of States.

It would be preferable for Kazakhstan, as it would for many other States, if consensus on Security Council reform were reached before the summit in September 2005. We believe also that attention must be paid to the Secretary-General's view that inability to reach consensus must not become an excuse for postponing this important action.

It will not be possible to implement all the recommendations contained in the report without a competent and professional Secretariat. The Secretariat should be staffed with the people who are the most suited to performing the tasks at hand. In that regard, it is very important to ensure that the measures taken to strengthen the Secretariat achieve their main goal: improving efficiency.

The world's leaders will come to New York in September to make momentous decisions regarding the most far-reaching reforms in the entire history of the United Nations. The ability of our Organization to respond effectively to global challenges and threats depends on our preparing the relevant recommendations for our leaders. Despite the criticism of the United Nations, Kazakhstan, like other States, places in the Organization all its hopes for achieving stability in the world and a just world order based on universally recognized norms.

Mr. Zenna (Ethiopia): I join other delegations in expressing my appreciation and thanks to you, Mr. President, for convening these meetings of the General Assembly for an exchange of views on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). We commend the Secretary-General for submitting the report, which sets out a road map for our deliberations on the reform of the United Nations.

We associate ourselves with the statements made by the delegation of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the delegation of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the delegation of Malawi on behalf of the African Group.

We believe that the report of the Secretary-General provides us with a good basis for the comprehensive review of the progress made in the fulfilment of all commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration, including the internationally agreed development goals, and the global partnership required for their achievement.

We noted with interest the Secretary-General's approach, which gives equal attention to the development, security and human rights aspects of the reform. We firmly believe that there can be no lasting peace or true collective security in our global society as long as extreme poverty and unprecedented affluence exist side by side. The report of the Secretary-General outlines a valuable strategy for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by providing a time line for achieving the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income, by completing the World Trade Organization's Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations and by cancelling 100 per cent of the debt of most heavily indebted poor countries. The innovative idea of launching in 2005 an International Finance Facility to support an immediate front-loading of official development assistance is also noteworthy.

However, we note with concern that some important proposals and recommendations of the Millennium Project report and the views that the African Union Council of Ministers submitted to the Secretary-General were not substantially integrated into the report. We also feel that the special conditions of Africa and the least developed countries have not been significantly reflected in the report. The timely implementation of the MDGs is imperative in sub-Saharan Africa, where the majority of the countries are least developed countries, and which remains the centre of extreme poverty.

We concur with the notion that security threats are interconnected. We firmly believe that they could be effectively checked, arrested or eliminated through cooperative action. To strengthen our collective security there is a need for sustained interaction between the United Nations and regional organizations such as the African Union. To that end, a mechanism should be designed for continued logistic and financial support to a pan-African peace strategy, which would comprise an African standby force, a continent-wide early warning system, a mediation unit and a post-conflict reconstruction programme. In that regard, my

delegation supports the recommendation contained in the Secretary-General's report to support the African Union in establishing an African standby force.

We believe that the United Nations has a special responsibility to promote and develop a comprehensive strategy for combating terrorism. We also acknowledge the centrality of international cooperation and the need to build partnerships in the fight against terrorism. The United Nations needs to establish partnerships with regional organizations such as the African Union to ensure a coordinated approach in preventing and combating terrorism. We would also like to underscore the crucial need to strengthen national capacities for preventing and combating terrorism.

The Secretary-General has made some important and pertinent recommendations concerning institutional reform. In that regard, we note the thrust of the recommendations for Security Council reform, in particular the drive to expand the Council and make it a representative body. We hope that during our debate, the issue of greater transparency, accountability and effectiveness will be further explored.

We also recognize the Secretary-General's recommendation to reform the Secretariat and better organize it in order to make it an essential component of an effective system for collective security. We need to consider and act on the recommendations of the Secretary-General in that regard.

The recommendations concerning the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council do not live up to the expectations of the majority of Member States, which have made very pertinent comments and which hope that those main organs will be endowed with the appropriate authority and mechanisms effectively to address identified threats and challenges in general and development issues in particular. We still hope that we can redress the aforementioned shortcomings and restore the General Assembly's role as the most democratic and universal policymaking organ of the United Nations.

As the Economic and Social Council is an essential and principal organ of the United Nation charged with dealing with questions of economic and social development, it would be ironic if we failed to strengthen it at the very time when poverty, disease and environmental degradation are considered to be among the main threats to international peace and security.

We believe that enhancing the effectiveness of the reform of the United Nations will require coordination and synergy among the Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. We have observed that regional and subregional organizations in Africa serve as an essential vehicle in the maintenance of peace and security and in the promotion of economic development and social progress. In view of the important role that regional organizations such as the African Union play in the areas of peace, security and development, my delegation hopes that, in accordance with the relevant recommendation, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will be further strengthened.

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to draw the attention of members to the fact that 35 speakers remain on the list. We will be able to finish our work tomorrow if speakers do not take too long in making their statements. I therefore appeal to all those representatives who are due to speak tomorrow to be brief.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.